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ABSTRACT

This compilation consists of various letters and documents issued for public comment during 1986-1987 by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) of the U.S. Department of Education, during its examination of the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) system to determine any needed changes and improvements. This compilation includes only the material that was distributed for public comment. It does not include the minutes of meetings of advisory groups formed during 1986 to study ERIC, the background papers that were prepared to stimulate internal discussion, or the many letter reactions that were received from the field in response to these public announcements. The components of this package are: (1) "ERIC in Its Third Decade" (a statement of principles); (2) "Domains or Scope Areas to Be Included in the ERIC System"; and (3) "Summary of the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) Redesign" (an implementation paper). Appended to the third component are two position papers: (1) "Access ERIC" (including "ERIC Partners"), by John Collins; and (2) "Adjunct Clearinghouses," by Elizabeth Payer. Except insofar as they may be modified by further public comment or congressional action, it is OERI's intent to proceed to modify ERIC along the lines described in these documents. These changes involve: (1) Merging the Clearinghouses on Teacher Education and Counseling and Personnel Services into a "School Professionals" Clearinghouse; (2) Changing the names of seven Clearinghouses; (3) adding a Clearinghouse on "Education Statistics," to be located within the Center for Education Statistics (CES); (4) Initiatng a new ERIC system component called "ACCESS ERIC" to concentrate on marketing, promotion, advertising, public relations, training, system-wide information analysis products, and liaison with other information systems; (5) Initiating a formal users' group to be called "ERIC Partners"; (6) Initiating a new kind of "Adjunct Clearinghouse" that will, at no cost to ERIC, acquire and process for ERIC the educational literature in the distinctive areas (e.g., art) in which their host organizations may have a special interest. (AA)

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April 1987

ERIC Redesign
Papers Issued for Public Comment
(1986 - 1987)

This compilation consists of various letters and documents issued for public comment during 1986-1987 by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) of the U.S. Department of Education, during its examination of the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) system to determine any needed changes and improvements. This compilation includes only material that was distributed for public comment. It does not include the minutes of meetings of advisory groups formed during 1986 to study ERIC, the background papers that were prepared to stimulate internal discussion, or the many letter reactions that were received from the field in response to these public announcements.

I. ERIC in Its Third Decade (a statement of principles). December 8, 1986.

A. Letter of Transmittal (2p.)

B. Executive Summary (an abstract) (2p.)

C. ERIC in Its Third Decade (12p.)

II. Domains or Scope Areas to be Included in the ERIC System. December 22, 1986.

A. Letter of Transmittal (2p.)

B. Provisional List (5p.)

III. Summary of the Educational Resources Information Center Center (ERIC) Redesign (an implementation paper). March 27, 1987.

A. Letter of Transmittal (2p.)

B. Summary (3p.)

C. Concept Papers (30p.)

1. ACCESS ERIC (including "ERIC Partners"). By John Collins (Harvard University). 20p.

2. Adjunct Clearinghouses. By Elizabeth Payer (OERI). 10p.

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY
FOR EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND IMPROVEMENT

December 8, 1986

Dear

After much deliberation and many months of work devoted to examining how the Educational Resources Information Center program might be strengthened and improved, the Office of Educational Research and Improvement is now ready to announce its preliminary plans for the future direction of this system.

Enclosed for your review and consideration is our ERIC redesign proposal -- ERIC in Its Third Decade -- recently presented to Assistant Secretary Finn. With this proposal we can be sensitive to the needs of the various education disciplines and population groups depending on ERIC; and, we can make the system more responsive, intelligible and accessible to current as well as potential users. We believe that we are pursuing only those changes that best serve American education.

Recognizing the importance of better system-wide coordination and marketing, we are pleased to tell you that we have adopted the Council of ERIC Directors' proposal for ACCESS ERIC.

In order to provide the public with an opportunity to ask questions or make comments about the redesign proposal, OERI plans to hold a public meeting on Thursday, December 18, 1986. The meeting will be held from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. in Room 326 at 555 New Jersey Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C.

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We are asking for comments on the enclosed paper by January 16, 1987. Within the next week, we also plan to send you additional material regarding the reconfiguration of the ERIC network.

Again, I want to extend my deep appreciation for your diligence and creative ideas without which this proposal would not exist.

Please feel free to contact me directly at (202) 357-6556 with your comments.

Sincerely,

Jim Bencivenga

Jim Bencivenga
Director, Information Services

Enclosure

ERIC in Its Third Decade

Executive Summary

After 20 years of faithful service, the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) program is being redirected to better serve the information needs of American education in the coming decade. The essence of the new ERIC is captured in its motto "ERIC -- Where Improved Learning Begins."

After an extensive study aided by a panel of experts, the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) proposes new strategies to strengthen ERIC and make its products and services more useful and more widely available.

Recognizing that the needs of the education community and society as a whole have changed greatly since ERIC began, and building on ERIC's strengths while overcoming acknowledged weaknesses, the following major shifts are proposed for the new ERIC:

- from primarily serving the needs of academic researchers to giving proper attention to the needs of a far broader and diverse education community;
- from stressing an archival role to greater emphasis on the dissemination of useful information;
- from highlighting the collection of unpublished materials to giving more balanced treatment to the full range of valuable education information including statistics, government reports, published studies and articles from virtually all journals.

In addition to shifting emphases, ERIC will be strengthened through the establishment of new partnerships by:

- linking ERIC with other OERI dissemination networks;
- recruiting public, private, commercial and non-profit partners for collaborative efforts and service as "ERIC Outlets";
- welcoming "adjunct clearinghouses" to join the ERIC network;
- seeking additional funds for ERIC from other public and private sources; and,
- integrating ERIC more effectively with international data sources and information systems.

Together, new methods of dissemination, new users, new technologies and new funding arrangements will enable ERIC to go beyond its traditional role and truly function as a comprehensive education information dissemination system. Further, this expanded role will enable ERIC to more fully support the mission of OERI -- to put useful research knowledge into the hands of education decision makers, practitioners, parents and the media.

All subject areas covered by the present system will be retained. Future ERIC clearinghouses will be organized around major functional categories relevant to the information needs of the next decade. ACCESS ERIC, a new system component, will coordinate and market system-wide products and services and train users in how to use ERIC.

ERIC in Its Third Decade will be followed by an implementation paper which will delineate the specific means by which OERI will carry out the principles and guidelines as set forth in this report.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY
FOR EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND IMPROVEMENT

TO: Chester E. Finn, Jr.
Assistant Secretary and
Counselor to the Secretary

FROM: Jim Bencivenga, Director
Information Services

Jim Bencivenga

SUBJECT: ERIC in Its Third Decade

This paper will:

1. provide a brief background and general description of the ERIC system;

2. describe the system's strengths and virtues;

3. discuss the system's weaknesses, particularly as identified and distilled from the review of the past eight months, as well as provide recommendations for correcting these weaknesses; and,

4. outline broad shifts in the conceptual underpinnings of ERIC. From these underpinnings, we will develop a set of general principles and guidelines to direct and shape ERIC's policies and priorities in its third decade.

Introduction

This administration seeks widespread understanding and use of the findings of education research and statistics so that the education of America's children is improved. Toward this end, for the last eight months, we in the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI), aided by a panel of outside advisers, have examined ways to strengthen and improve the Education Resources Information Center (ERIC) program.

Entering its third decade of faithful service to American education, this pioneering information system still remains for far too many of its potential users unfamiliar, inaccessible, or ill-suited to their needs. As with its OERI parent, so also must ERIC be charged to serve a much wider spectrum of American society than its traditional users in the research community. Its role must be more closely tied to the larger mission of OERI and directly address the four goals that guide OERI's work:

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1. to improve significantly the nation's education statistical base, both in the amount of data and its quality;

2. to broaden our understanding of education outcomes;

3. to improve efforts to disseminate information to educators, policy makers, and the public; and,

4. to replenish the intellectual capital of education through well-chosen programs of worthwhile research.

ERIC plays a role integral to the mission of OERI -- to put useful research knowledge into the hands of education decision-makers, practitioners, parents, and the media. Since its role is so closely tied to this mission, ERIC must extend itself to more fully and directly address the four goals which guide OERI's work.

This paper will be followed by a second implementation paper. It will delineate the means by which we plan to implement the principles and guidelines set forth in this paper.

I. Background and General Description

ERIC was originally established in 1966 by the U.S. Office of Education (OE) as a way of making reports of government-sponsored research widely available from a central source. Prior to this time, research reports submitted to OE by contractors and grantees usually received an initial scattered distribution and then disappeared; there was no system for providing educators throughout the country with information from these reports about developments in education. The task of ERIC was to collect and process these reports for the "ERIC document collection" (available on microfiche), to announce them in a monthly journal of abstracts called Research in Education (RIE), and to distribute copies of them at low cost. The first issue of RIE was published in November 1966.

The document collection has since been expanded to include not only research studies but also practice-oriented materials, program descriptions and evaluations, conference proceedings, bibliographies, curriculum guides, state-of-the-art papers, and other types of material. The name Research in Education was changed in 1975 to Resources in Education to reflect the broader nature of the collection. The collection includes more than 260,000 documents from a variety of public and private sources;

approximately 1000 are added each month. Some of these are published materials, but most are unpublished materials that are not widely available except through the ERIC system. Many libraries, information centers, and other institutions have the entire ERIC collection on microfiche. At last count, these institutions numbered 759.

In 1969 another component, Current Index to Journals in Education (CIJE), was added to the system. This monthly publication, similar in format to RIE, includes citations to articles published in more than 780 education-related periodicals. More than 338,000 articles have been cited in CIJE and approximately 1,500 citations are added each month. ERIC does not distribute copies of the articles themselves because of copyright restrictions; however, some journals and reproduction facilities outside the ERIC system do provide reprints or filmed copies of articles cited in CIJE. CIJE, RIE, and the microfiche collection are available on a subscription basis.

ERIC now includes sixteen clearinghouses located around the country -- each responsible for acquiring, processing, and disseminating information about a particular aspect or subject "domain" of education (such as reading and communication skills, adult education, education management, technology, higher education, etc.). Central ERIC, in OERI's Information Services office, is responsible for administering and setting policy for the system. It prepares scopes of work, conducts the contract competitions, and monitors the work done under each contract.

In addition, several system contractors process and make available materials from all the clearinghouses. Direct service to clients is provided chiefly by intermediaries: by libraries and search services that purchase ERIC materials for their clients' use. The "Facility" receives and edits the abstracts and annotations prepared by the clearinghouses, prepares the magnetic tapes that are the heart of the ERIC storage and retrieval system, and performs system-wide information and coordinative functions. The ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS) produces and markets microfiche of the documents listed in RIE. It serves standing order, i.e. subscription customers who purchase the complete fiche sets; sells individual fiche; and prepares hard copy on receipt of customer orders. The commercial firm, Oryx Press, coordinates journal coverage with Central ERIC and the clearinghouses, markets and produces CIJE and several other basic ERIC-related resource publications.

Throughout its history, ERIC has taken advantage of advances in information technology. Indeed, for sixteen years ERIC has been

available online through major commercial suppliers of information -- first through Lockheed's DIALOG, later also through System Development Corporation (SDC) and Bibliographic Retrieval Service (BRS). Today, ERIC is widely available online; and, because of government sponsorship, it has become one of the least expensive databases to search. Making ERIC database searching even cheaper and more accessible is the advent of compact laser disk or CD-ROM technology with its vast storage capability. By the end of this year, we expect that the ERIC database will be available on CD-ROM through commercial ventures supported by SilverPlatter Information of Wellesley, Massachusetts and DIALOG Information Services of Palo Alto, California.

ERIC is arranged to draw on the best traits of both centralized and decentralized organizational systems. As the distinguished librarian Kenneth Dowlin accurately states:

> ERIC is built as a relatively well-defined relationship between a federal agency, clearinghouses, service providers, and users. The centralized aspects provide quality control for indexing, coordination of the operations, a common input point for the federal community, and overall system planning. The decentralized clearinghouses and service providers allow leverage of funding, sources closer to users, and specialized expertise which increases the credibility of the entire system. (Commissioned paper.)

II. Strengths of the ERIC System

The strengths of the ERIC system stem from the diverse nature of its database and the decentralized aspects of its organization. Because of a long-standing history of working with selected areas of the academic community, the system has developed strong, targeted professional ties that give it access to a variety of resources across the country. Added to this is the institutional support it receives from the clearinghouse host organizations which make annual direct contributions to the ERIC system of more than a million dollars.

ERIC has also demonstrated an impressive ability to leverage non-Federal funds, which have enhanced its visibility and widened its use. Of the total annual expenditure of more than 130 million dollars for the development, distribution and use of ERIC products and services, just 4.1 percent is now provided by the Federal Government ($5.8 million in fiscal year 1987). This leverage has been most successfully exerted in the application of technology to ERIC database storage and retrieval functions. With the explosion of information science technology, private vendors have recognized and taken advantage of ERIC's availability by putting it online and onto optical laser disk.

(As a government-sponsored database, ERIC is in the public domain.)

Finally, the ERIC system has demonstrated creativity, adaptability, and versatility. It has been responsive to changing user needs, developing and expediting new products, and responding to new OERI priorities.

III. Shortcomings of the ERIC System

ERIC's weaknesses derive in part from the lack of an institutional policy to guide the system. This vacuum has given rise to some serious shortcomings.

ERIC responds to the needs of only select audiences. There is a widespread perception that ERIC is a "closed club" whose complicated systems of access, content, and retrieval are designed exclusively for members of the education research and information science communities. Notwithstanding ERIC's value to education researchers, a wide spectrum of potential ERIC users remain "in the dark," underserved and frustrated, or simply oblivious to the existence of ERIC.

While practitioner-oriented materials, as well as research syntheses and other analytic products needed by decision-makers have periodically been added to the database, such materials have not been added to the extent that they are very helpful to many school (and college) education practitioners, state, local (and national) policy makers, journalists, parents, and other potential ERIC users. Though the system does not turn them away, it does not -- in its acquisitions and dissemination practices -- pay purposeful and regular attention to their needs and priorities and customary means of acquiring information. Further, little systematic attention has been paid to marketing and dissemination efforts -- i.e., pinpointing ERIC users and getting useful education information into their hands.

Finally, ERIC has failed to realize its full potential by not meshing its efforts closely with other complementary dissemination programs within OERI and the Department as well as with other external systems. It has not successfully integrated itself into other education dissemination networks, systems, and arrangements. Hence, ERIC is more like a well-stocked warehouse of exotic garments than a mass retailer to the millions who need and want the education equivalents of shirts and socks as well as the occasional feather boa.

IV. Need for New Emphases

While the overall organization of the ERIC system is sound for the most part, it still reflects decisions made twenty years ago

when ERIC was established. Though the levels and disciplines within American education have not changed entirely over this period of time, the needs of the education community and the society as a whole have changed greatly. The education map has been revised considerably since the ERIC system came into being. New routes must be drawn on it to new destinations as well as old. New methods of dissemination must be used. As part of this response, ERIC should shift the focus of its activities and these shifts should occur in three broad areas:

1. from primarily serving the needs of academic researchers to giving proper attention to the needs of a far broader and diverse education community -- policy makers, practitioners, the public, and the media;

2. from stressing its archival function to giving greater strength, visibility and effectiveness to its dissemination function, particularly by capitalizing on manageable and convenient dissemination mechanisms that have resulted from technological advances; and,

3. from highlighting the collection of unpublished materials to giving more balanced treatment to the full range of valuable education information including statistics, government reports, published studies, and virtually all journals.

We must look to the ERIC system to expand exponentially the types of, and ways that, it makes information on education practice, research, and statistics available. Undergirding OERI's intent for ERIC is an unequivocal sense of obligation to meet the information needs of policy makers, school administrators, teachers, journalists and the general public in addition to those of research scholars.

Hence, ERIC needs to alter its traditional priorities and give greater emphasis to the dissemination of useful information. In terms of overall effort and resource utilization, we intend for ERIC to establish a ratio of dissemination to archiving and data gathering that will approximate 70/30. Further, the preference given to acquisition by ERIC of information about education will be the following: statistical data, indexing of education journals, government studies and documents (Federal, state and local), curriculum materials, and "fugitive" literature. The archival function will grow from this 70/30 ratio at a rate commensurate to increased private or public resources for ERIC, including resources resulting from fees and user charges associated with the dissemination system.

Originality and creativity in responding to the dissemination challenge will be key aspects of the redesigned ERIC. It will be essential that each clearinghouse have a strategy for distilling, synthesizing, excerpting, explaining, appraising, and retailing the material already in its database, as well as for adding to it. We will ask clearinghouses to develop and implement comprehensive marketing plans to reach various audiences including non-traditional users. In addition, each clearinghouse will gather relevant statistical information in its subject domain.

Overall, the ERIC system will be responsible for conducting specific dissemination tasks outlined as follows:

Local:

- Training intermediaries as searchers in school districts.
- Making ERIC available on CD-ROMs at the district level.
- Providing connections to ALANET, the American Library Association's online information database serving some 1,500 libraries.

State:

- Updating training materials for use in schools of librarianship.
- Collaborating in programs for state librarians and state education departments; maintaining linkages with regional labs, governors' education aides, state school board associations, and education associations.

National:

- Disseminating ERIC digests to journalists; promoting technology development and providing seed money for CD-ROM technology use.
- Providing unlimited online capability for Central ERIC and the regional laboratories.

ERIC must become more than an array of clearinghouses. It must act -- and be perceived -- as a comprehensive education information dissemination system that goes well beyond archival activities to reaching out to its audiences through a multitude of avenues and collaborative relationships. While clearinghouses are vital resources, they are not the only means to the ends of ERIC.

In contemplating a new configuration for the system, we intend to retain all existing scope or domain areas already covered by the clearinghouses. However, changes in American education dictate some new combinations or "hybrid" configurations. We plan to organize the domains of future ERIC clearinghouses around major functional categories of American education that are now and will be especially salient during the next decade.

Through ERIC we will seek widespread attention to and use of education statistics. As noted earlier, each clearinghouse will gather statistical information pertinent to its domain. These data gathering efforts will be furthered by establishing a mini-clearinghouse on statistics within OERI's Center for Education Statistics (CES). Building on CES activities directed at making its information more reliable, timely, and useful, ERIC will support wider dissemination of education statistical data. The addition of statistical information to the ERIC database will be a crucial new element for ERIC and will also occur within the 70/30 guideline.

Collaborative Arrangements

ERIC does not exist in a vacuum. It is key to OERI's dissemination mission. It cannot afford to operate as a self-contained or free-standing entity. Therefore, we intend to establish mechanisms to link ERIC to OERI's regional laboratories and national research centers. We also seek to make the National Diffusion Network (NDN) state facilitators partners in the ERIC dissemination system. As "ERIC agents" in every state, NDN facilitators can provide an added service to ERIC audiences by encouraging and supporting increased access to system products and services.

Given the demographic trends in American education for the remainder of this century, it is critical that issues of minority, disadvantaged, and "at risk" children be elevated to the highest policy levels. We intend to specify that the dissemination functions of the ERIC system, in concert with OERI, do so. In order to meet the critical needs of diverse and often isolated rural educators, we hope to tie the new $4 million rural initiative earmarked for the regional labs more closely to appropriate dissemination efforts across the entire ERIC system.

Enlisting Partners

We hope to enlist a variety of new partners for ERIC -- public and private, commercial and nonprofit. In addition to the Education Department linkages described above, we will also seek

collaborative efforts with other federally-supported ventures as well as with OERI clients, state and local education agencies, and other education associations and organizations that deal in information dissemination and use. These partners will assist ERIC with two very important functions: gathering valuable information that exists but is not now identified or collected by the ERIC system and disseminating useful information that is needed by ERIC audiences.

Gathering Information

To aid ERIC with this first task of gathering information, we will designate "adjunct" clearinghouses to be solicited through RFPs inviting all kinds of interested groups to join the ERIC system. We envision these groups to be organizations that typically already have collections of information which they feel are valuable, helpful, and should be accessible through ERIC. Similar to the current clearinghouses, these organizations will have specific areas of focus or domains of interest for information acquisition. Unlike the current clearinghouses, however, adjuncts will not require OERI funds. Rather, they will pay for document selection and dissemination as the price for belonging to the system. Adjunct clearinghouses will also process their documents through the ERIC Facility and will be subject to OERI peer review and quality control standards.

Disseminating Information

To amplify ERIC's dissemination capabilities, we also hope to recruit many other partners. These partners will be intermediaries to assist ERIC with a range of functions including information collection, analysis, synthesis, and especially information dissemination. To this end, we will particularly look to state and local education agencies, teacher centers, education organizations, and associations to become designated "ERIC outlets" agreeable to learning and providing information about ERIC as well as making ERIC available to members and constituents. Myriad in number, these outlet arrangements will be added to already existing ERIC access points and will be established at no cost to the government other than perhaps training searchers or explainers in effectively using the ERIC system. Through "grass roots" arrangements such as these, we hope to broaden the utility as well as the visibility of ERIC.

Leveraging other Resources

Additional funds will be sought from other public and private sources. We will explore supplemental funding possibilities with other units of the Department of Education. Each of the

solicitations we announce will request cost-sharing submissions by bidders. Where no-cost arrangements are feasible, we will also explore these. Our intent is to provide the greatest possible service at the best price to American taxpayers.

Identity

Being a part of the ERIC team will be an honor, with commensurate responsibility, for many different organizations. Participation in the system will be viewed as an open and contributory process, not just an activity a select few are paid to carry out. When working well, the advancement of ERIC will be in the "self interest" of those who participate. We understand that individual clearinghouses will aggressively establish an identity -- but only in so far as this identity is clearly wedded to the ERIC system and to OERI. All ERIC system publications will clearly display the OERI and ERIC logos. Federalism, not balkanization, is our goal.

Moreover, the management of a clearinghouse is a serious responsibility, one that carries with it costs as well as benefits. Clearinghouses have the obligation to be impartial and to be open to new methods of dissemination, new users, and new funding arrangements or cost-sharing proposals.

A new word or phrase will be added to that of ERIC to better identify the system for non-traditional users. Our new watchword: ERIC - Where Improved Learning Begins.

Visibility

ERIC has international visibility and importance. There are 112 ERIC collections dispersed throughout 22 foreign countries, mostly in western Europe. During the past twelve months, ERIC has received requests for technical assistance from 16 countries including Great Britain, West Germany, the USSR, Korea, South Africa, and China. The system is currently providing technical assistance to Canada in the establishment of a Canadian education information system. In August of this year, ERIC Directors met with representatives of Great Britain, Canada, and Australia to explore a cooperative effort to develop a cluster of English-speaking education information systems using ERIC as a common denominator. In this age of the "shrinking planet," we must continue to take advantage of this international image and integrate ERIC more effectively into the data sources and information needs of other countries.

Using Technology

ERIC must continue to take advantage of information technology advances and must provide its information through avenues its users find most helpful and most accessible. While ERIC has in the past relied mainly, although not exclusively, on print and microfiche, it must now focus its efforts on becoming wholly compatible with the computer medium -- both through online and CD-ROM arrangements. The private sector is clearly in the forefront of research and development in these areas. Since the market for information services is so competitive, private sector investment -- resulting in easier use, wider access, and lower costs -- will naturally benefit ERIC.

We must pledge ourselves to provide wherever feasible free guidance and support for information seekers. Each clearinghouse will have an 800 toll-free telephone number. Anyone in the USA will be able at no cost at least to call ERIC and find out how to tap what it has to offer (and what it has will be market driven). After a potential user has clearly defined what he or she wants and determined what ERIC offers, then and only then will the system consider a fee for some types of information service.

ACCESS ERIC

Responding to ERIC Redesign Study Panel concerns as well as embracing a recommendation of the Council of ERIC Directors (COED), we intend to make ERIC services and products more accessible and available to the range of ERIC audiences -- policy makers, practitioners, education journalists, the public, as well as education researchers. This will be accomplished in part through ACCESS ERIC, a new contract to coordinate system-wide products and services and the marketing of those products and services. ACCESS ERIC will coordinate an extensive network of professionals able to draw on the information resources of ERIC. These professionals will be information digesters, distillers, and disseminators from all domains of the education enterprise. They will be found in state education departments, teacher centers, association offices, central offices of school districts, private school systems, and most commonly in school and university libraries. It is envisioned that these intermediaries will total hundreds, maybe even thousands, who serve their members and customers with ERIC-based information in ways that the current rather cumbersome library-based microfiche system cannot. The training of online ERIC database searchers, "intermediaries," will be a major effort of ACCESS ERIC.

V. Concluding Remarks

We are an information society. ERIC is an information system. It is time for American education to recognize its need for ERIC. It is time for ERIC to better meet the needs of American education.

We live in a knowledge-driven world. It is not hyperbole to state that America's future depends on its children learning how to learn. Our objective is to ensure that the ERIC of the next decade in principle and in deed follows paths that assist mightily in doing just that.

The ERIC of the past twenty years has resembled an educational garden, one largely hidden, too often uncultivated, too selective in its produce, and not extensively harvested. Our vision of ERIC for the next decade contrasts sharply with that of its first two. We plan a continuously harvested "hothouse" of information and ideas. We envision partnerships with organizations such as state and local education agencies, teacher centers, education associations, libraries, and others who are capable of producing and distributing ordinary garden varieties as well as hybrids and newly discovered strains of useful information about education. We seek partners to share the responsibilities and benefits of belonging to the largest social science database in the world, a well-established system, but one that needs much new cultivation.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY
FOR EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND IMPROVEMENT

December 22, 1986

Dear

I hope that you have already received and reviewed the OERI redesign proposal -- ERIC in Its Third Decade -- that we mailed to you on December 8. As promised, we are now forwarding additional material regarding improvements in the configuration of the ERIC network.

Enclosed you will find: (1) a pocket guide to ERIC which lists the current ERIC clearinghouse configuration; (2) a listing of the major scope areas or "domains" covered by these clearinghouses as well as new areas of emphasis that we feel must be added; and (3) a summary of the redesign proposal in case you have not yet received it or had time to review the longer version.

We estimate that the ERIC system will require from twelve to twenty clearinghouses to span all these domains adequately. We plan to fund these clearinghouses via cost sharing arrangements with interested organizations. We will also invite other interested parties to join the ERIC system as "adjunct" clearinghouses. These adjuncts will receive support in the form of seed money, but should not expect long-term funding.

We need a configuration that is efficient -- with no more management units than necessary, and a minimum of overlap or redundancy among them. We must also ensure coherence across the domains that each clearinghouse will be asked to handle. It may be reasonable to expect a given clearinghouse to handle apples and oranges -- but not apples and armadillos.

It is well to remember that ERIC has not been a static organization. Over the course of its first two decades, it has changed to meet the needs and demands of new audiences. ERIC was established in 1966 with twelve clearinghouses. By 1972, the number had grown to twenty. During the following four years, with several mergers and closings, it was reduced to the sixteen clearinghouses that constitute the current structure. Please recognize, therefore,

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that this is an opportunity to scrutinize a clearinghouse arrangement that was last changed at the outset of ERIC's second decade to see how best it might be organized for the third decade.

We encourage your suggestions and welcome your thoughts concerning these matters, especially ways by which a new structure can better organize the archival and dissemination functions of the ERIC system. We are open to sound ideas and creative suggestions, and we propose to examine these jointly with interested colleagues from the education and information science communities.

We would also appreciate your thoughts about additions to or subtractions from our list of scope areas or domains. While we intend to take advantage of the "best" of what the current system offers us, we also wish it to be more responsive to the needs of American education.

If you plan to respond in writing, please include in your proposed configuration(s) the scope areas that would be covered by each clearinghouse. Please address your comments by February 2, 1987 to Ms. Elizabeth Payer at the following address:

Information Services/OERI
Room 300
555 New Jersey Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20208

Thank you for your assistance in this important effort.

Sincerely,

Jim Bencivenga

Jim Bencivenga
Director, Information Services

Enclosures (3)

Domains or Scope Areas
To Be Included in the ERIC System
(Provisional - December 1986)

1. leadership, management and structure of public and private education organizations.

2. methods and varieties of organization and organizational change in schools.

3. the social context of education organizations.

4. technology applications to education management.

5. theory and practice of education leadership.

6. education reforms at all levels — policies, practices and performance.

7. art and music education.

8. science, mathematics, and technology education.

9. learning theory/outcomes (including the impact of parameters such as interest level, intelligence, values, and concept development upon learning.)

10. Federal, state and local statistical databases.

11. preparation, practice and supervision of counselors at all educational levels and settings.

12. research into counseling and guidance.

13. personnel selection procedures such as testing and interviewing and the analysis and dissemination of the resulting information.

14. all aspects of physical and health education.

15. school personnel at all levels.

16. teacher selection and training, preservice and inservice education.

17. theory and practice of teaching.

NOTE: For each content area or field listed (e.g. reading, mathematics, science, handicapped, gifted, etc.) corresponding domains will be included for curriculum and instructional materials, teacher preparation, preservice and inservice training, research, program evaluation and assessment.

18. preservice and inservice preparation of administrators

19. Federal, state, and local legislation and policies affecting education and educational practice.

20. education reforms and improvement efforts.

21. state and national education policy studies.

22. theory and practice of educational equity.

23. public, parochial, and private school programs and practices in urban areas and the education of disadvantaged minority children and youth in various settings.

24. planning, building, equipping, and maintaining education facilities.

25. physical, cognitive, social, and cultural development of children from birth through early adolescence.

26. prenatal factors affecting education.

27. parents and families and their roles in education.

28. learning theory, research and practice related to the development of young children, including the preparation of teachers for this educational level.

29. education programs and community services for preschool children.

30. home schooling.

31. character/morality/values education.

32. tests and other measurement and assessment methods.

33. applications of tests, measurement, or evaluation in education projects or programs.

34. research design and methodology in the area of testing and measurement/evaluation.

35. learning theory.

36. assessment of performance at all levels of education.

37. secondary school curricular stratification and academic performance.

38. non-school influences on academic preparation and achievement including television, work, community, and peers.

39. effective study habits, study skills, and the role of higher order cognitive skills in learning.

40. homework and other methods of self-study.

41. drop out programs, prevention, and attendance.

42. determinants of academic motivation, curricular choice, and occupational aspirations.

43. academic preparation of teachers and instructional competence.

44. topics relating to college and university performance, quality, programs, and students.

45. higher education assessment issues.

46. higher education faculty and leadership issues.

47. higher education curriculum and instructional programs.

48. institutional research at the college or university levels.

49. professional education (medicine, law, etc.); continuing education; collegiate computer-assisted learning and management; graduate education; university extension programs.

50. planning, governance, finance, evaluation, and management of institutions of higher education.

51. business or industry education programs.

52. development, administration and evaluation of two-year public and private community and junior colleges, technical institutes, and two-year branch university campuses.

53. two-year college students, faculty, staff, curricula, programs, support services, libraries, and community services.

54. articulation of two-year colleges with secondary and four-year postsecondary institutions.

55. advanced placement programs and policies.

56. all aspects of education and development of handicapped and gifted children, including prevention, identification and assessment, intervention, and enrichment, both in special settings and within the mainstream.

57. education technology instructional design, development, assessment, and evaluation.

58. the media of education communication as applied to teaching and learning: computers and microcomputers, television, telecommunications (cable, VCR, fiber optics, broadcast, satellite) audio and video recordings, film and other audiovisual materials.

59. information resources/sciences and libraries at all levels.

60. operation and management of information services for education-related organizations.

61. information technology related to libraries and information storage and retrieval.

62. languages and language sciences, including theoretical and applied linguistics.

63. all areas of foreign language, second language, and linguistics instruction, pedagogy, or methodology.

64. teacher training and qualifications specific to the teaching of foreign languages and second languages.

65. English as a second language.

66. English language acquisition and bilingual education.

67. language assistance activities and information.

68. preservice and inservice training of bilingual and English as a second language teachers.

69. comparative bilingual education programs and policies.

70. reading, English literature, and communication skills at all levels.

71. research and instructional development in reading, writing, speaking and listening.

72. identification, diagnosis and remediation of reading problems.

73. speech communication, mass communication, interpretation, rhetorical and communication theory, speech science, and drama.

74. all aspects of reading behavior with emphasis on physiology, psychology, sociology and teaching.

75. instructional materials, curricula, tests/measurement, and methodology at all levels of reading.

76. role of libraries and other agencies in fostering and guiding reading.

77. diagnostic and remedial reading services in schools and other settings.

78. preparation of reading teachers and specialists.

79. literacy.

80. cultural, social, economic and other factors related to quality education for rural residents.

81. education programs and practices in small schools.

82. history, geography, and civics.

83. social science disciplines and their content (anthropology, economics, geography, history, sociology, social psychology, political science, etc.).

84. other social issues bearing on education.

85. all levels and settings of technical, vocational, career, adult and continuing education.

86. adult education from basic literacy training through professional skill upgrading.

87. career education including career awareness, career decision making, career development, and career change.

88. technical and vocational education, including general employability skills, employment and training programs, work experience programs, education/business partnerships, entrepreneurship, adult retraining, and vocational rehabilitation for the handicapped.

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Within the major scope or domain areas of each clearinghouse, coverage will also be given to students in small schools and urban and rural schools as well as special populations such as American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Hispanic Americans, migrants, and other racial/ethnic minority children and youth at all education levels.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY
FOR EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND IMPROVEMENT

March 27, 1987

Dear Colleague:

The Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) would appreciate your comments on the proposed redesign of the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) system. We are proposing to establish sixteen clearinghouses and three new system components: ACCESS ERIC, adjunct clearinghouses, and ERIC Partners. The enclosed "Summary of the ERIC Redesign" provides the new clearinghouse configuration and explains the goals of each ERIC component.

In brief, ACCESS ERIC will provide systemwide coordination, training, materials development, and outreach and awareness activities designed to make ERIC services and products accessible and useful to a greatly expanded audience. Adjunct clearinghouses will be established to enhance ERIC coverage and dissemination of documents and materials on topics not adequately treated under the current configuration, such as Art and Music, Private Education, and Education Policy. ERIC Partners will be organizations and institutions that will actively and widely distribute and advertise ERIC materials or services.

The new ERIC design is based upon the collective suggestions of many people, both within and outside the Department of Education. Late in 1986, OERI announced a broad proposal for redirecting and improving ERIC. The rationale for these new directions were outlined in the paper "ERIC in Its Third Decade." This paper recommended that ERIC: (1) become more responsive to the information needs of policymakers, school administrators, teachers, journalists, and the public in addition to researchers; and (2) make information on education practice, research, and statistics more widely available. The paper also urged that stronger collaborative arrangements, ways to generate additional resources, and new partners for ERIC could lead to greater visibility and usefulness of the entire system.

Public comment received in response to "ERIC in Its Third Decade" has assisted OERI to develop strategies for improving and expanding ERIC. These strategies are framed in the three enclosed documents:

- Summary of the ERIC Redesign, which outlines the configuration of the new clearinghouses and the new system components. Proposed changes to the current clearinghouse structure include a Clearinghouse on School Professionals (which combines the scopes of the current Clearinghouses on Counseling and Personnel Services and Teacher Education), and a new Clearinghouse on Education Statistics (to be established and operated by the Education Department's Center for Education Statistics).

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20208

- o ACCESS ERIC: a Concept Paper, which develops the rationale, mission and activities of ACCESS ERIC and of ERIC Partners.

- o The Adjunct Clearinghouse: a Concept Paper, which discusses the role and responsibilities of adjunct clearinghouses.

We are very much interested in your reactions to the proposed ERIC configuration as well as to the concept papers, and would appreciate receiving your comments by April 24, 1987. If you plan to respond in writing, please address your comments to Ms. Elizabeth Payer, at the following address:

U.S. Dept. of Education/OERI
Information Services
555 New Jersey Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20208

We appreciate your assistance in this effort.

Sincerely,

Jim Bencivenga

Jim Bencivenga
Director, Information Services

Enclosures (3)

Summary of the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) Redesign

ERIC Clearinghouses. The 16 clearinghouses acquire and review documents, and prepare indexes and abstracts which are entered into the ERIC database. Each clearinghouse also prepares periodic reports, digests, and other documents that cover research in the areas assigned to the clearinghouse. (The proposed clearinghouse configuration is given below.)

ACCESS ERIC. This addition to the system is specifically designed to open up ERIC to educators and policymakers who do not now use the system. It will conduct and coordinate marketing, development and training and will also sponsor the development of syntheses documents on topics of high priority, e.g., educational policy, secondary education, etc. Initially, the range of funding for ACCESS ERIC will be from $500,000 to $750,000.

Adjunct Clearinghouses. These clearinghouses will acquire documents and journal articles for the ERIC database in fields not adequately covered by the major clearinghouses and disseminate information in various forms regarding their particular scope areas. Seed money will be provided to establish three or more adjunct clearinghouses (at a one-time cost of $50,000 each) in such areas as (but not necessarily limited to) educational policy, art and music, and private education.

ERIC Partners (or Outlets). ERIC partners will be organizations or institutions with a particular interest either in the ERIC system or in a specific discipline included in the ERIC system. ERIC partners will actively disseminate ERIC-developed materials to their constituents, and will help identify documents or materials to be considered for inclusion into the ERIC database.

Proposed ERIC Clearinghouses

Adult, Career and Vocational Education. Covers adult, continuing, career and vocational education and related areas such as proprietary schools. Includes all levels of adult and continuing education from basic literacy training through professional skill upgrading; vocational and technical education covering all service areas for secondary, postsecondary, and adult populations; career education and career development programs for all ages and populations in educational, institutional, commercial, and industrial settings.

Assessment and Evaluation. Covers tests and other measurement devices; methodology of measurement and evaluation; and applications in educational and other professional settings. Includes research design and methodology and general areas of human development and learning theory.

Community and Junior Colleges. Covers development, administration and evaluation of two-year public and private community and junior colleges, technical institutes, and similar institutions. Includes coverage of two-year college students, faculty, staff, curricula, programs, support services, libraries, community services, linkages with business and industry and articulation with secondary and four-year postsecondary institutions.

Effective Schools: Leadership, Management and Finance. Covers leadership, management, finance, governance, and structure of public and private secondary schools. Includes schools, school districts, and other educational agencies with an emphasis on training, practice and theory of administration, inservice and preservice preparation of administrators; methods and varieties of organizations; organizational change and finance; and research on the components of effective schooling.

Elementary and Early Childhood Education. Covers physical, cognitive, social, educational and cultural development of children from birth through early adolescence. Includes learning theory, research and practice related to the development of young children.

Handicapped and Gifted Children. Covers education and development of the special child, including prevention, identification, assessment, intervention and enrichment. Includes areas relevant to both handicapped and gifted populations including early childhood education, curriculum, teaching methods, administration, career education, teacher preparation, legislative and judicial requirements, program development and evaluation, and related services.

Higher Education. Covers education beyond the secondary level that leads to a bachelor's, master's, doctoral, or professional degree. Includes college and university conditions, problems, programs and students; curricular and instructional programs; institutional research; governance and management of higher education institutions; and business or industry programs leading to a degree.

History, Geography and Social Science. Covers the content of instruction in history, geography and social science at all levels. Includes history, geography, anthropology, economics, ethics, moral education, music and art, sociology, social psychology, political science; applications of theory and research to social science education; education as a social science; comparative education (K-12); content and curriculum materials on subjects such as law-related education; and equity and discrimination issues.

Languages and Linguistics. Covers languages and language sciences, theoretical and applied linguistics, and all areas of language instruction. Includes teacher training and qualifications specific to the teaching of foreign languages and secondary languages, commonly and uncommonly taught languages, and English as a second language.

Literacy and Literature. Covers reading, English and communication skills at all levels, including writing, speaking and listening. Includes educational research and development in these areas and the identification, diagnosis and remediation of reading problems and preparation of instructional staff and related personnel in these areas.

Rural Education and Small Schools. Covers economic, cultural, social or other factors related to rural residents, American Indians/Alaska Natives, Mexican-Americans and migrants. Includes programs, practices, and materials that provide learning experiences designed to meet the special needs of rural populations and for all schools where smallness is a factor.

School Professionals. Covers the preparation, practice and supervision of school-based instructional and support professionals. Includes counselors and guidance pesonnel, teachers, teacher assistants and aides, and school psychologists. Includes preparation, practice and supervision of counselors at all levels; teacher selection, preservice and inservice preparation, and retirement; and the theory, philosophy and practice of teaching.

Science and Mathematics. Covers science, mathematics and environmental education, including biology, physics, earth science, computer science, chemistry and other physical sciences. Includes curriculum development, teacher education and learning theory. Includes instructional materials, curriculum guides and teaching guides; descriptions of educational programs, curricula, and activities; research and evaluative studies; computers, computer applications, and computer software at all levels.

Technology and Information Resources. Covers educational technology and library and information science at all levels. Includes instructional design, development, and evaluation using educational technology and the media of educational communication: computers and microcomputers, telecommunications (cable, broadcast, satellite), and audio and video recordings as they pertain to teaching and learning.

Urban Education. Covers programs and practices in public, parochial and private schools in urban areas, and the education of minority children in various settings. Includes the theory and practice of educational equity, urban and minority experiences, and urban and minority social institutions and services.

Education Statistics. This clearinghouse will be housed in the U. S. Department of Education's Center for Education Statistics. Covers the collection of statistical materials. Includes reports, databases and selected statistical tables.

ACCESS ERIC

A Concept Paper

John W. Collins III
Monroe C. Gutman Library
Harvard Graduate School of Education
Harvard University

Commissioned by the U.S. Department of Education
March 1987

The purpose of this concept paper is to provide a broad, creative projection of the issues, needs, and structure that the Office of Educational Research and Improvement might consider in planning for the Request for Proposals leading to the implementation of ACCESS ERIC.

ACCESS ERIC will be a new component of the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) system. As this paper attempts to form a conceptual framework for ACCESS ERIC it will draw heavily upon the variety of criticisms, praise, reaction, commentary and suggestions which have resulted from the activities surrounding the recent reexamination of the ERIC system.

In 1986, the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, aided by a panel of outside advisors, commissioned papers, and reactors, began a study to determine ways to strengthen and improve the ERIC system. The work of the panel of outside advisors (the ERIC Redesign Study Panel) included an examination of the evolution of ERIC during its twenty year history; the identification of strengths and weaknesses of ERIC in its present form; and recommendations for enhancements to the system that would enable ERIC to enter its third decade in a position of renewed strength and vitality in service to American education.

The purpose of this paper is not to write yet another history of ERIC, nor is it to recapitulate the work of the Redesign Study Panel. Documentation of those issues is readily available (see Plank, 1986; Collins, 1986; Lodish, 1986). Some background information is needed, however, to understand the origin of the ideas surrounding the ACCESS ERIC concept, as well as to envision the potential structure and role of this new ERIC component.

BACKGROUND

Comprised of members representing a variety of constituencies and armed with the knowledge provided by individual experience, voluminous background readings, and initial concept papers, the ERIC Redesign Study Panel began its deliberations in May 1986. Initially focusing on issues relating to technology, quality control and dissemination efforts, the panel was impressed with much of what it found out about ERIC. In the words of one reactor, "Among all the now thousands of databases, ERIC alone is alive and vibrant, with the desire to be responsive to its myriad clients, to be concerned about the vitality and use of its products." (Crandall, 1987, p. 1).

As the work of the panel progressed, several recurring themes emerged, however, that would provide opportunities for system enhancement. The panel discovered that while technologically sound, the system lacked comprehensive training programs for users of the database.

Misconceptions abounded concerning the quality and nature of the

documents that were included in the system and large audiences of potential ERIC users remained underserved and unaware of the advantages of using ERIC as a source of education information.

These opportunities were enumerated in the summary redesign report, ERIC IN ITS THIRD DECADE:

> ERIC's weaknesses derive in part from the lack of an institutional policy to guide the system. This vacuum has given rise to some serious shortcomings.
>
> ERIC responds to the needs of only select audiences. There is a widespread perception that ERIC is a "closed club" whose complicated systems of access, content, and retrieval are designed exclusively for members of the education research and information science communities. Notwithstanding ERIC's value to education researchers, a wide spectrum of potential ERIC users remain "in the dark," underserved and frustrated, or simply oblivious to the existence of ERIC.
>
> While practitioner-oriented materials, as well as research syntheses and other analytic products needed by decision-makers have been periodically added to the data-base, such materials have not been added to the extent that they are very helpful to many school (and college) education practitioners, state, local (and national) policy makers, journalists, parents, and other potential ERIC users. Though the system does not turn them away, it does not--in its acquisitions and dissemination practices--pay purposeful and regular attention to their needs and priorities and customary means of acquiring information. Further, little systematic attention has been paid to marketing and dissemination efforts--i.e., pin-pointing ERIC users and getting useful education information into their hands.
>
> Finally, ERIC has failed to realize its full potential by not meshing its efforts closely with other complementary dissemination programs within OERI and the Department as well as with other external systems. It has not successfully integrated itself into other education dissemination networks, systems, and arrangements. Hence, ERIC is more like a well-stocked warehouse of exotic garments than a mass retailer to the millions who need and want the education equivalents of shirts and socks as well as the occasional feather boa. (Bencivenga, 1986, p. 5)

In discussions of these issues the ERIC Redesign Panel, and others, suggested a variety of options for dealing with specific shortcomings of the ERIC system. Outreach programs directed at nontraditional ERIC users, increased marketing efforts, broad based training programs and

other systemwide activities were mentioned as possible solutions. Most of the suggestions for improvement, however, fell outside of the existing ERIC structure. They were not appropriate for individual clearinghouses to deal with since the issues assumed a broad, systemwide perspective.

Although not articulated in a specific manner or form, further discussion of potential improvements to the ERIC system began to underscore the need for the creation of a new entity within ERIC to accommodate systemwide issues and coordinate programs and services reaching out to a diverse populace of heretofore disenfrancised ERIC users.

ACCESS ERIC was first mentioned as a potential solution to these problems in a letter to Assistant Secretary Finn from the Council of ERIC Directors (COED). In a proposed four-point plan for the redesign of ERIC, the COED referred to the creation of "a new unit called ACCESS ERIC which will increase the overall impact of the ERIC system" and "coordinate systemwide products and services."

While sufficiently vague in their articulation of the scope and role of ACCESS ERIC, the COED had identified a specific entity that could fill the gaps that had emerged over time and frustrated systemwide efforts to coordinate products and services.

Support for the concept of ACCESS ERIC grew as more documents describing the potential for such an addition to the ERIC system emerged. Point 3 of the COED four-point plan outlined their vision for ACCESS ERIC in more detail.

> 3. ACCESS ERIC
>
> <u>Create "ACCESS ERIC," a new coordinating entity responsible for general system-wide user services</u>.
>
> People seeking information about education will be better served than they are at present by the creation of ACCESS ERIC. These publics include policymakers, practitioners, media, and the general public, as well as the traditional education research community.
>
> All ACCESS ERIC functions will be systemwide. These would include, but would not necessarily be limited to the following:
>
> a. serve as the general information center for ERIC as a whole, while the clearinghouses maintain scope-specific user services functions;
>
> b. promote the system to its multiple audiences, including the press;

c. identify national education information needs;

d. assess the effectiveness of dissemination efforts;

e. coordinate systemwide, interdisciplinary product development in response to identified needs and audiences;

f. coordinate communication among system components and users;

g. establish working relationships with other educational dissemination programs and systems;

h. provide ongoing training services to searchers, intermediaries, and others who play linking roles with specific target audiences;

i. develop and implement marketing strategies for both products and services;

j. conduct general, free computer searches for standing order customers and other users, and refer scope-specific requests to clearinghouse experts;

k. develop new sources of system income;

l. work to institutionalize ERIC within the education community (e.g., education journals, schools of education, schools of library and information science, state-level programs, school districts). (Walz, 1986, p. 5)

Finally, in adopting ACCESS ERIC as a major component of the ERIC Redesign Plan, Bencivenga's summary report defines ACCESS ERIC as follows:

ACCESS ERIC

Responding to ERIC Redesign Study Panel concerns as well as embracing a recommendation of the Council of ERIC Directors (COED), we intend to make ERIC services and products more accessible and available to the range of ERIC audiences--policy makers, practitioners, education journalists, the public, as well as education researchers. This will be accomplished in part through ACCESS ERIC, a new contract to coordinate systemwide products and services and the marketing of those products and services. ACCESS ERIC will coordinate an extensive network of professionals able to draw on the information resources of ERIC.

> These professionals will be information digesters, distillers, and disseminators from all domains of the education enterprise. They will be found in state education departments, teacher centers, association offices, central offices of school districts, private school systems, and most commonly in school and university libraries. It is envisioned that these intermediaries will total hundreds, maybe even thousands, who serve their members and customers with ERIC-based information in ways that the current rather cumbersome library-based microfiche system cannot. The training of online ERIC database searchers, "intermediaries," will be a major effort of ACCESS ERIC. (Bencivenga, 1986, p.5)

Preliminary discussions indicate that the functional aspects of the issues, needs, and structure to be incorporated into ACCESS ERIC fall into four broad and overlapping categories:

Outreach and Awareness
Scanning and Assessment
Training
Client Services

The remainder of this paper will present a functional description of each of the categories.

OUTREACH AND AWARENESS

It is envisioned that the public relations function of ACCESS ERIC will encompass a variety of activities designed to (1) inform potential users about the ERIC system, and (2) recruit ERIC partners.

While the clearinghouses will maintain scope-specific outreach activities, ACCESS ERIC's efforts will relate to a much broader perspective. This will begin with the identification of an expanded audience of potential ERIC users. This audience will include, but not be limited to, principals, superintendents, teachers, school board members, parents, journalists, librarians, policy makers, students, scholars, reserchers, and others. ACCESS ERIC will acquaint these varying constituencies with the ERIC system through appropriate media, depending on the nature of the group being addressed. An implied goal of the outreach program will be to popularize the "concept" of ERIC as well as ERIC products and services.

In particular, outreach and awareness activities of ACCESS ERIC should be directed toward library schools, schools of education, journalism schools, state level programs, school districts, teacher centers, state government, and other targets of opportunity in an attempt to institutionalize ERIC within the education community. For as stated in the ERIC Redesign report on technology:

> Most people realize the power of information. In some fields, such as business, law and mass communications, the value of quick access to information is obvious. Stock brokers looking for data on market trends, lawyers seeking legal precedent, or reporters trying to find background information to meet a deadline, have recognized the value of becoming familiar with the use of computerized databases such as LEXIS, NEXIS, or any of a number of business files, to meet their information needs. Their companies and professional schools have seen fit to train them in the use of these computer databases and to support access to automated files in the workplace. The use of computerized databases is common in many disciplines.
>
> Why isn't this true in the field of education? Why is it not second nature for a teacher, a member of a school board, a principal, or a state education official, to consult the major education database in the world for an answer to their information needs concerning education issues? (Collins, June 1986, p. 1)

Perhaps the answers to the above questions lie in the fact that ERIC has not become an integral part of most educational institutions.

It must be recognized that ERIC is not the only information system offering services to audiences concerned with education. ACCESS ERIC should establish working relationships with other information service providers and promote projects of mutual interest and benefit leading to the increased availability of information. Education is inter-disciplinary and cooperative programs with existing systems for the education, commercial, social service and health fields among others, could serve to promote ERIC to a wide audience.

A key element within the outreach activities of ACCESS ERIC is communication. ACCESS ERIC must communicate with active and potential ERIC users, as well as with ERIC system components. As one member of the ERIC Redesign Study Panel stated:

> Since becoming a principal 10 years ago, I have stayed conversant with the literature in the field of education. Yet not once during those 10 years have I received any mail from ERIC, heard it mentioned by fellow practitioners, or come across it in any of my professional journals, magazines, or association mailings.
>
> Obviously, generalizing from such a limited sample can be misleading. But I do not believe that my experience is unique. In fact, during our two-day discussion, more than one representative of ERIC noted that ERIC is "one of the best kept secrets."
>
> For teachers and principals this statement is certainly on target. One dictionary definition of "secret" clarifies why ERIC is not now used by practitioners: It is (1) concealed from general

knowledge or view; kept hidden. And it is (2) beyond ordinary understanding, mysterious.

In order to counteract this concealment and mystery, ERIC must do two things in tandem for teachers and principals:

(1) Increase the quantity and quality of materials useful to people who work in schools;

(2) Get these materials into the hands of practitioners. (Lodish, 1986, p.2)

A major outreach activity of ACCESS ERIC relates to the implementation of a program to be called "ERIC Partners." The concept of such a program has been described in detail by Elizabeth Ashburn, of the Office of Educational Research and Improvement.

ERIC PARTNERS

It is recommended that the ERIC system as a whole establish formal relationships with various education organizations to collaborate in the dissemination of education information. Such participating organizations would be called ERIC Partners, and they would receive special benefits from the ERIC system. ACCESS ERIC would coordinate these "partnerships" and would work with the Clearinghouses to build on existing relationships.

The purpose of the partnerships would be to expand, formalize, and systematize relationships with organizations which have members or constituencies who are both the producers and users of education knwoledge and information. The utilimate goal would be a richer and more reliable network for dissemination and an increase in knowledge and information utilization.

Strong relationships currently exist between individual clearinghouses and education organizations, primarily education associations. Key association members, those who are leaders in the fields covered by the clearinghouse scope areas, serve on clearinghouse advisory boards. Clearinghouses work with associations in acquiring documents, both the official Association publications and the papers delivered at national, regional, and state meetings. Associations often provide complimentary ERIC exhibit space at their annual meetings, and their staffs serve as resources to clearinghouses for information and referral to experts in the various education professions.

These significant contributions need to be recognized by the ERIC system in a formal way. These relationships should be expanded to include an emphasis on what ERIC can contribute to the educaiton organizations. Finally, the partnerships concept should be extended to other types of education organizations. These three ways to build on the existing model of clearinghouse-education

organization relationships are outlined below, as well as the recommended structure for implementation.

SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTIONS TO ERIC by the education organizations need to be recognized in the education community. Organizations need to receive something in return for their contributions in order to maintain and expand relationships which are beneficial to all. Recognition is key to maintaining productive relationships. This recognition could occur in many ways. One way is to award a "certificate of ERIC Partnership" to those involved in this collaborative participation; this certificate could be displayed by the organization and would serve to raise the awareness of the integral nature of ERIC to the country's education system. To recognize the standards which would exist for the partnership, applications (brief) would be required, providing explanation and documentation for implementing the partnership objectives. The certificate would be renewable every 2-3 years, on the basis of a letter reconfirming the original agreement and explaining adherence to the agreement. This application and reapplication process, accompanied by a certificate, would raise the status of organizational involvement in ERIC, because attention is being paid to that involvement by the Federal funding agency's directive.

EXPANDED RELATIONSHIPS with ERIC Partners would specify many ways that organizations could be involved and would emphasize benefits of ERIC to the organization. Benefits which organizations would receive might include: updates on recent ERIC documents of interest to the organization, awards for particularly significant organization contributions, discounts on certain ERIC products or services, training for key staff and/or members, a newsletter with ERIC systemwide information and tips for accessing ERIC as an organization membership benefit. Ways in which an organization might be involved include: training members in awareness and use of ERIC, disseminating ERIC publications, disseminating ERIC conferences, providing systematic acquisition routes, and systemwide adivsory board membership for ACCESS ERIC. These benefits would be provided both through the central coordinating unit and through coordinated clearinghouse efforts. Involvement would also be through both structures.

EXTENSION OF PARTNERSHIPS to other types of organizations involved in education is important for wider dissemination. In addition to the several hundred education associations already in partnership-type relationships with clearinghouses, the following groups would be expected to be interested in ERIC Partnerships: SEAs; LEAs; schools of library science; schools of education; National Diffusion Network (NDN) facilitators; labs and centers; private industry; foundations; and perhaps private citizens. ERIC Standing Order Customers may also be appropriate as ERIC Partners.

THE NATURE OF THE PARTNERSHIP would vary according to the capacities and needs of each organization. Because these organizations are "volunteer" participants, much of the partnership activity must be at their discretion; however, some "core" standards and activity could be stated as an expectation. Core Partnership activities should include regular dissemination of information about ERIC products and services and systematic acquisition activity on the part of the education organization. The organization should be able to explain a structure and process for both these partnership activities. Core Partnership activities on the part of the ERIC system would be systematic dissemination of information that meets the needs of the Partner organizations and recognition of Partner involvement. Other core activities might be included, but the voluntary nature of this arrangement should be kept foremost in any statement of partnership expectations.

It should be clear that ERIC Partners would not be clearinghouses. They would not evaluate or process documents. The current relationships between individual ERIC clearinghouses and education associations would be maintained and enhanced by the formal, systemwide recognition of those relationships, which would include information-sharing and coordinated activity.

IMPLEMENTATION AND COORDINATION OF ERIC Partnerships would be the responsibility of ACCESS ERIC. Partners should be seen as a major way to achieve the objectives of promoting the ERIC system as a whole and making ERIC visible and accessible to many audiences. A Partners database should be maintained by ACCESS ERIC; the database would include information about the type of the organization and its partnership activities, as well as contacts in each organization for mailing purposes. More than one individual might be listed for each organization. For example, ERIC newsletter mailings might be sent to the organization's editor, while acquisition reminder letters might be sent to the publications department and letters about Partnership renewal or requests for nominations for ACCESS ERIC Advisory Board members would go to the organization's director. Adequate resources and staffing should be allocated by ACCESS ERIC to the Partnerships database, since it will be the foundation of systemwide dissemination and promotion. Maintaining the quality of information in this relatively small database (estimated 2,000 organizations) is key to reaching many thousands of individuals in education.

The current system of clearinghouse relationships with education organizations works well with scope specific information. It is limiting, however, in the operating assumption that education needs and interests do not overlap. The more comprehensive and coordinated approach of ERIC Partners promotes the integration of the multiple overlaps in organization activities and education

arenas. It will ensure that, for example, an ERIC product on teacher recruitment and selection is promoted to all organizations interested in that subject, not just to those which are affiliated with the scope-specific clearinghouse.

The clearinghouse relationships should be used as a starting point for developing the ERIC Partners process and database. ACCESS ERIC should work closely with clearinghouse directors in this effort since the directors have established relationships with these organizations and have extensive experience in this area. In no way should the Partners efforts detract from the benefits that currently exist for both the clearinghouses and their related organizations. This effort should enhance the existing relationships and use the knowledge gained from these relationships.

SCANNING AND ASSESSMENT

Closely related to outreach and awareness, ACCESS ERIC will also perform systemwide scanning (to identify emerging areas of interest and potential for new ERIC products and services) and user needs assessment activities. Based on needs studies, user surveys, and other strategies, ACCESS ERIC will coordinate systemwide efforts to reach out to existing and potential ERIC users.

A comprehensive scanning and assessment program should have several continuing stages.

1. Monitoring. In order to inform its own activities and those of the clearinghouses, it will be necessary for ACCESS ERIC to identify and monitor the education information needs of the nation.

   This could be accomplished by maintaining close contacts with the varied constituencies through attendance and representation at meetings of appropriate associations, monitoring professional literature (as well as print and broadcast news) and otherwise maintaining an awareness of the education issues facing ERIC constituents. Additionally, the development of needs studies and user surveys should be an important aspect of this component of ACCESS ERIC.

2. Assessment. Two types of ERIC system activities need to be assessed: (1) uses of the ERIC database, and (2) outreach efforts of ACCESS ERIC and the individual clearinghouses.

   The fact that ERIC is searched electronically provides many opportunities for the collection of data for further study. ACCESS ERIC should ascertain from the data available from suppliers of computerized access to ERIC, how the system is

being used, what is being cited, what topics are being searched, etc. Awareness of the appropriate issues will enable ACCESS ERIC to espond to specific needs of users with products and services that are most relevant.

Present outreach efforts should be evaluated by the ERIC system. Since ACCESS ERIC provides an opportunity for a centralized outreach arm for all of ERIC, a survey of present practices would identify successful marketing strategies and suggest their continuation. (It could also identify less successful, or redundant, efforts and suggest their elimination.)

TRAINING

As stated earlier in this paper, the training of ERIC database searchers will be a major effort of ACCESS ERIC.

A program of training and exposure to the available technologies used to search ERIC should be undertaken on a variety of levels by ACCESS ERIC. Encouragement and incentives should be offered to teacher training institutions to increase the familiarity with ERIC that teachers receive as part of their professional training. Modeled after law students' reliance on legal databases upon graduation, teachers should be dependent on ERIC as a source of educational information when they enter the profession. This would increase the availability of access points to the systems as new teachers demanded access to ERIC as part of their professional practice.

An interesting model for training activities in this area can be seen in the following press release from the H. W. Wilson Company:

For Release: December 1, 1986

WILSON COMPANY ANNOUNCES GRANT
IN SUPPORT OF LIBRARY EDUCATION

Heralding the availability of the new WILSONDISC CD-ROM retrieval service, the H. W. Wison Company announces its outright grant of a complete WISLONLINE Workstation hardware package to each of the 60 ALA accredited library schools in the United States and Canada.

Designed to accommodate the CD-ROM and online retrieval services that comprise the WILSONLINE Information System, the Workstation consists of an IBM PC XT personal computer with 640 KB of memory, color monitor, Proprinter, modem, CD player, and all of the requisite peripheral equipment. In addition to these components, each library school will receive a compact disc demonstrating the WILSONDISC CD-ROM service.

> This donation is in keeping with the Wilson Company's long history of support for library education, which has included scholarships awarded regularly to library schoolls since 1957.
>
> Full details on the WILSONLINE Workstation grant, including a proposed schedule for installation, will be announced at the ALA Meeting in Chicago on January 17, 1987, where the equipment will be demonstrated.
>
> (H. W. Wilson Co., Press Release, 1986)

There is a lesson to be learned here. The H. W. Wilson Company produces a variety of indexes. One is called EDUCATION INDEX. ACCESS ERIC should be aware that there are many information service providers in existence today. Investments in equipment upon which to provide training is an excellent tactic to create well trained future users of a system.

While it is recognized that competitive markets in the private sector may inhibit multi-system training efforts, ACCESS ERIC should work with the variety of online suppliers of ERIC to ensure the greatest possible outreach of training efforts. ACCESS ERIC should encourage other commercial vendors to make their products available in similar fashion to that described above by the H. W. Wilson Company.

Other audiences for whom increased training in the technological uses of ERIC would be beneficial include state education officials, superintendents, principals and school board members. Workshops and training sessions, sponsored by ACCESS ERIC, would help to contribute to an informed educational community. Demonstrations of the capabilities of the ERIC system, conducted by trainers who could make the system "sing," as well as speak to the issues of its relatively inexpensive costs and the value of information, would be essential to the success of exposing new audiences to ERIC.

Varying levels of training shuld be presented to different groups. In the above example, training sessions aimed at education decision makers should be geared to show off the utility of using ERIC in their organizational settings. As they became sold on the concept of providing ERIC information services within their organizational environments, further training sessions could be developed to reach the actual users of the system, on site.

ACCESS ERIC should further encourage system training by directing efforts at the state departments of education, ERIC clearinghouses, local school departments and other centers where a program of "training" trainers could be introduced.

[A detailed model of a variety of training activities appropriate to the ERIC system can be found in "Eric Training Needs," by Katherine Clay (see references). In her paper, Clay identifies specific audiences for training, training materials, varying levels of training

for specific groups and suggests people and agencies best suited to provide training.]

CLIENT SERVICES

At the heart of ACCESS ERIC should be an overriding theme of providing service to the users of the ERIC system. The best intentions of any public service enterprise can be thwarted if the perceptions of the public indicate that the system is unresponsive to the needs of individual clients or users. Large governmental organizations are particularly susceptible to perceptions of this nature.

ACCESS ERIC should accept the responsibility of representing and serving the varied ERIC constituencies and coordinating the activities of the various ERIC components in ways which best meet the needs of the public. This can be accomplished through the implementation of a number of services.

1. An 800 Telephone Number.

A widely publicized, easily remembered (1-800-TRY-ERIC ????) telephone number for ACCESS ERIC could put anyone in the nation in contact with ERIC at no charge. Trained personnel familiar with the intricacies of the ERIC system would staff the telephone lines and determine if a caller should be referred to another location or if the request should be handled by ACCESS ERIC. This one number, offering a guaranteed response to an inquiry concerning education information, could do much to enhance the entire ERIC system.

Careful monitoring of the types of calls received could provide valuable information as ACCESS ERIC attempts to identify trends and issues facing its constituents. (The telephone inquiries could lead to product development, for example.) Additionally, careful selection and training of personnel staffing the telephones could personalize the image of ERIC and demystify the complexities and diversity of the system.

2. Professional Network.

The customer services arm of ACCESS ERIC should coordinate an extensive network of professionals able to draw upon the information resources of ERIC. These professionals will be information digesters, distillers, and disseminators from all domains of the education enterprise. They will be found in state education departments, teacher centers, association offices, central offices of school districts, private school systems, and most commonly in school and university libraries. Some will be trainers, some will be representatives of standing order customers, while others will be specialists in particular domains encompassed by ERIC.

These professionals will serve a variety of purposes for ACCESS ERIC. Some may be called upon to write Digests or Research Summaries, or engage in other product development enterprises. Others may be called to arrange local access to an ERIC collection. Still others may be expert computer searchers capable of conducting training sessions in their region.

Collectively, these professionals will represent a resource of great importance to the ERIC system and to American education.

3. ACCESS ERIC Users Group.

ACCESS ERIC should coordinate a program providing ERIC searchers the opportunity to share their experiences and expertise. Support by ACCESS ERIC for an ERIC Users Group could take a variety of forms, including electronic mail, a newsletter, social gatherings at professional meetings, discounts on ERIC products, or other potential opportunities for members of a group of regular ERIC users.

4. Product Development.

In response to needs studies and user surveys ACCESS ERIC should support systemwide product development. An important aspect of this component of ACCESS ERIC's marketing plan will be the identification of new products directed at new audiences of ERIC users. This suggestion is echoed in the following recommendation from a member of the ERIC Redesign Study Panel:

Recommendation 1--That the ERIC system make a strong effort to reach the policymaker, the media, and the general public with education information that is useful, timely, and in a format which is convenient to these audiences. This may require the development of entirely new products, delivered in a more timely fashion, and written in a format which is appropriate to these audiences.

Recommendation 2--That the ERIC system give priority to the development and dissemination of education information in formats which are useful to education practitioners. This may also require the development of entirely new products, and a shift of priority within the ERIC system. (Duncan, 1986, p. 8)

The opportunities for new product development may be limitless. It has been suggested that the sale of topical information from the ERIC database, on floppy disc, might have a wide appeal. A school system might purchase a disc containing all the references in ERIC on information concerning the pros and cons of installing seat belts in school buses, for example. Eventually, it might be possible to purchase subsets of the ERIC database in this form, and allow interested parties to develop small libraries of ERIC information stored on floppy discs.

Regardless of the form that new products may take, ACCESS ERIC should take advantage of whatever opportunities emerge, technologically or otherwise, by keeping abreast of new developments and maintaining close and cooperative contacts with the research and development activities of the private sector.

As part of its product development activity, ACCESS ERIC should maintain a database of names of individuals upon whom ACCESS ERIC might call to assist in the production of new ERIC products. The products may take the form of more traditional ERIC publications (AIP's, Digests, etc.) as well as other concepts such as research summaries, bibliographies, press releases and new stories, statistical summations, practitioner oriented products, newsletters, etc. The names of the individuals included in the product development database should reflect the broad demographic makeup of ERIC's redefined constituents. (See the Client Services section of this paper.)

The potential for income generation as a result of the development and sale of new products and services is significant. It has been estimated that approximately $500,000 a year could be generated from the sale of ERIC products and services. The following suggestions from the COED four-point plan list a few potential opportunities.

Revenue Generation-- Generate increased financial support for the ERIC system through user fees at fair market value. Many products and services of the ERIC system are marketable. Many have been assumed by commercial corporations with no financial return to the system. It may be financially prudent for ERIC to be supported in part by those who directly benefit from it.

Key areas for revenue generation are:

- Fees for the announcement of selected commercially available publications in Resources in Education. Commercial publishers would be eager to have their publications announced in the world's largest education database.

- Development and sale of systemwide products and services.

- Fees for regional workshops for ERIC's 700 Standing Order Customers and other user groups. Libraries have budgets for staff development. Other agencies which promote the use of databases charge for user workshops. (Walz, 1986, p. 40)

Some of the above suggestions may not be feasible in a practical or legal sense but they should be considered, as should other potential sources of income such as for-fee searches conducted by users by ACCESS ERIC, consultation services, and general inflationary and operational increases in present ERIC charges.

5. Commercial Vendor Relations.

ERIC is now available in a variety of forms through a growing number of commerical suppliers. Traditional suppliers of access to the ERIC files such as BRS, DIALOG and SDC are being challenged in the marketplace by producers of ERIC on compact disc. ACCESS ERIC should work with the commerical sector in ensuring that ERIC receives proper promotion in the private sector as well as ensuring that it remains available in as wide a variety of forms (paper and electronic) as possible.

SUMMARY

After a lengthy and detailed examination of the ERIC system, it has been determined that a new component be added to the existing structure of ERIC. This new component will be called ACCESS ERIC and it will coordinate systemwide products and services. ACCESS ERIC will be composed of four broad and overlapping categories and functions.

OUTREACH AND AWARENESS

- o identify a diverse audience of ERIC users;
- o familiarize multiple audiences with ERIC and its capabilities;
- o identify national education information needs;
- o establish working relationships with other educational dissemination programs and systems;
- o coordinate communication among system components and users.

SCANNING AND ASSESSMENT

- o assess the effectiveness of systemwide dissemination efforts;
- o develop and implement marketing strategies for both products and services;
- o coordinate systemwide, interdisciplinary product development in response to identified needs and audiences;
- o conduct general for-fee computer searches for standing order customers and other users, and refer scope-specific requests to clearinghouse experts.

TRAINING

- o provide nationwide user training in the use of the ERIC database;

- o provide ongoing training services to searchers, intermediaries, and others who play linking roles with specific target audiences;

- o work to institutionalize ERIC within the educational community (e.g., educational journals, schools of education, schools of library and information science, state-level programs, school districts).

CLIENT SERVICES

- o serve as the general information center for ERIC as a whole, while the clearinghouses maintain scope-specific user services functions;

- o respond to user requests for information (refer scope-specific requests to the appropriate clearinghouse);

- o coordinate an extensive network of professionals capable of drawing on the information resources of ERIC;

- o coordinate the development of new products and services, and explore areas for additional revenue generation;

- o maintain liaison between commercial vendors and other groups that may use the ERIC database.

CONCLUSION

ACCESS ERIC has been conceived as a new component within the ERIC system. Its mission will be to address systemwide issues in regard to outreach and awareness, scanning and assessment, training and client services. As the newest member of the ERIC family, ACCESS ERIC will perform a variety of managerial and administrative functions for the ERIC system.

As a separate, but equal, entity within the system, the Director of ACCESS ERIC should have a seat on the Council of ERIC Directors and engage in collegial interaction with other components of the ERIC system. ACCESS ERIC will interact with other ERIC components in ways which are mutually beneficial, aiming toward the ultimate goal of improving the products and services of ERIC.

As Central ERIC continues its role of planning and monitoring the activities of the ERIC System and the Facility, ACCESS ERIC will coordinate activity within the four broad areas outlined in this paper. ACCESS ERIC in its capacity of reporting to, and receiving directions from Central ERIC, will act as a coordinating unit which maintains the broadest overview of system strengths and capabilities.

Building on the work of the ERIC Redesign Study Panel, the comments and advice received from reactors, the public, OERI and ERIC staff, and all others who contributed to the 1986 Redesign Study, ACCESS ERIC will promote the ERIC system into its third decade of service to American education. For, as the concluding remarks to ERIC IN ITS THIRD DECADE state:

> We are an information society. ERIC is an information system. It is time for American education to recognize its need for ERIC. It is time for ERIC to better meet the needs of American education.
>
> We live in a knowledge-driven world. It is not hyperbole to state that America's future depends on its children learning how to learn. Our objective is to ensure that the ERIC of the next decade in principle and in deed follows paths that assist mightily in doing just that.
>
> The ERIC of the past twenty years has resembled an educational garden, one largely hidden, too often uncultivated, too selective in its produce, and not extensively harvested. Our vision of ERIC for the next decade contrasts sharply with that of its first two. We plan a continuously harvested "hothouse" of information and ideas. We envision partnerships with organizations such as state and local education agencies, teacher centers, education associations, libraries, and others who are capable of producing and distributing ordinary garden varieties as well as hybirds and newly discovered strains of useful information about education. We seek partners to share the responsibilities and benefits of belonging to the largest social science database in the world, a well-established system but one that needs much new cultivation.
>
> (Bencivenga, 1986, p. 12)

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The Adjunct Clearinghouse

A Concept Paper

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The Adjunct Clearinghouse

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to explain the concept of the "adjunct clearinghouse," a new self-supporting component to be established within the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) system in order to improve and enhance the capabilities of that system. The intent of the ERIC adjunct clearinghouse is to supplement the "core" areas covered by the traditional ERIC clearinghouses.

This paper will attempt to outline more clearly and more concretely the characteristics of an adjunct clearinghouse and in so doing clarify areas of confusion expressed by the field in their comments on the policy document "ERIC in Its Third Decade." The objective of this paper will be to facilitate agreement about what an adjunct clearinghouse will be and what it will do.

Introduction and Background

In April 1986, the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) embarked upon a review of ERIC — the world's largest and most often used education database. This review was consonant with the belief of Education Department Secretary Bennett and Assistant Secretary Chester E. Finn, Jr. that it is the "...responsibility of the Department of Education to gather information and generate knowledge about education in an efficient and energetic manner and then make that information and knowledge accessible to people who might benefit from them." Since ERIC had just celebrated its twentieth year advancing a mission of bringing the English language literature of education to the attention of the educational community, this review of ERIC was especially timely.

The culmination of the review process was the development and release of an OERI policy paper," ERIC in Its Third Decade," which presented to the public a view of what ERIC could be in the future and an outline of several proposals that would be necessary to support these future endeavors.

The specifics of the proposals involved either the development of more deliberate working arrangements with other OERI-funded entities or the establishment of new, i.e. additional components within the ERIC network. It is interesting to note that these proposals have attempted to address the inherent tension that exists and has been highlighted in earlier reviews of the system — a tension between the ERIC that is an archive that captures and stores all materials above a quality threshold in a given topical domain and the ERIC that is a service or "client-oriented" system that provides easy access and accuracy of match between client interests and products retrieved.

The proposals included:

1. systematizing and strengthening collaborative arrangements with other OERI activities such as the labs and centers, library programs, and the National Diffusion Network;

2. leveraging additional resources, both government and private;

3. providing more focused attention to marketing, assessment, training, and outreach efforts through a new system-wide coordinating mechanism "ACCESS ERIC";

4. strengthening dissemination efforts through the creation of more ERIC outlets or partners; and,

5. encouraging self-supporting members of the ERIC system -- both to enhance acquisition efforts as well as to eliminate known information gaps through the establishment of "adjunct clearinghouses."

This paper will explain the last of these proposals -- the adjunct clearinghouse.

The ERIC Adjunct Clearinghouse

The policy paper "ERIC in Its Third Decade" describes the concept of the adjunct clearinghouse as follows:

> To aid ERIC with this first task of gathering information we will designate "adjunct" clearinghouses to be solicited through RFP's inviting all kinds of interested groups to join the ERIC system....Similar to the current clearinghouses, these organizations will have specific areas of focus or domains of interest for information acquisition. Unlike the current clearinghouses, however, adjuncts will not require OERI funds. Rather, they will pay for document selection and dissemination as the price for belonging to the system. Adjunct clearinghouses will also process their documents through the ERIC Facility and will be subject to OERI peer review and quality control standards.

Rationale

The rationale for establishing adjunct clearinghouses is OERI's belief in the existence of public and private groups (including private foundations with grantmaking activities for operational programs) that recognize an ERIC affiliation as a means to advance their own goals and to serve better their constituencies. Self-motivated, dynamic, and flexible, such organizations will seek an identification with ERIC as one avenue for helping clients -- whether it is through more effective collection and dissemination of

information or through the extensive knowledge base and support networks that ERIC has to offer.

Seen from this perspective, the ERIC adjunct clearinghouse can be viewed as an affirmation of the motivation and the commitment to excellence which exists in the education, business, and foundation communities. An adjunct clearinghouse will exist only if a "volunteer" or consortium of volunteers determines that a given segment of information about education is useful to its clients and merits attention and is therefore willing to expend the resources for its support. In return, this volunteer will receive the visibility, the access, the support, and the promotional opportunities which participation in the ERIC system has to offer.

Incentives

For a volunteer or consortium of volunteers proposing to join the ERIC system as an adjunct clearinghouse, there clearly are inducements. Being a member of the ERIC system is attractive for a number of reasons. It will offer recognition, credibility, readiness, access to markets, and support networks that an organization on its own would require years to establish and maintain. The costs associated with acquiring these kinds of intangible assets would be substantial.

Recognition

ERIC is a highly visible system among available social science databases and can pass on this visibility to groups wishing to participate as adjunct clearinghouses.

ERIC is the most often used database on education. As the redesign of ERIC is implemented, the system will become even more useful to and more often used by practitioners, policymakers, and journalists. ERIC is available in one or more forms at more than 3,000 access points in the United States. Somewhat over half of these access points are located at academic institutions; the remainder are in state and local education agency libraries, public libraries, intermediate service agencies, and the offices of professional associations. For sixteen years now ERIC has been available online through major commercial suppliers of information — first through Lockheed's DIALOG, later also through System Development Corporation (SDC), and Bibliographic Retrieval System (BRS). By the end of 1986, ERIC was also available on compact laser disc (CD-ROM) through two commercial ventures.

Possessing an international reputation, ERIC can be found at 120 different locations in 22 foreign countries. It has been used as the model by other countries also attempting to establish databases on education.

Credibility

ERIC has a reputation of reliability and credibility among information scientists and librarians as well as academic researchers and practitioners in the field of education and can offer this record to new organizations wishing to participate in the system as adjunct clearinghouses.

Through its indexes -- Current Journals in Education (CIJE) and Resources in Education (RIE) -- ERIC offers broad bibliographic control to a range of education topics and is particularly valued as the repository of fugitive literature not tracked or included in other bibliographic systems. At present CIJE includes citations to 338,000 articles published in more than 780 education related journals. RIE carries abstracts of more than 260,000 documents -- research studies, bibliographies, state-of-the-art papers, conference proceedings, speeches, and practice-oriented materials including program descriptions and evaluations and curriculum guides. To be covered by CIJE and RIE means to be archived and therefore available to the education world.

Readiness

During its twenty year history, ERIC has developed and perfected a sophisticated system of lexicography that has resulted in a retrieval capability which is easy to manipulate and conducive to producing precise results. Database searchers appreciate this capacity for "high recall" and "high precision." State-of-the-art technology applications to information science have further increased the power of the system and its responsiveness to users. CD-ROM technology will make low cost searching of the ERIC database possible for virtually every school district in the country. Thus, an organization that becomes an adjunct clearinghouse will be immediately connected to a system which is up and running and ready to receive, sort, categorize, and make its information available. Moreover, the ERIC database is available in a range of mediums -- on paper, on microfiche, online, and through laser disc technology. It is appealing to a range of users in a variety of settings.

New Markets

Because of deep rooted and extensive ties with the education and related communities, ERIC can provide as well as expand markets for the products and its services of an adjunct clearinghouse. ACCESS ERIC, a new entity to be created to perform general system-wide coordination functions, will assist in identifying and targeting these markets. ACCESS ERIC will conduct assessments and identify national education information needs. It will promote the system to its multiple audiences and develop and implement marketing strategies for both products and services.

Support Networks

The ERIC system can offer a new member, such as an adjunct clearinghouse, assistance in working with information related to almost every domain of education through subject area experts scattered across the clearinghouses and support facilities. Technical expertise is available in almost every area of education. At the same time, the system is more than a network of discrete units. It exists at already established sites that can provide an adjunct clearinghouse the opportunity to acquire information based on many years of experience as well as to gain first hand, day-to-day exposure to fundamental ERIC operations. ERIC is an "established" system in the best sense of that word.

Cost Savings

Tapping into an ongoing, twenty-year-old system provides obvious cost savings for organizations interested in entering an information market. There is no need for large capital outlays to establish the system since this has already been done. In addition, the "priceless" intangibles — reputation and recognition — are already established and affirmed.

Description

Similar to the traditional ERIC clearinghouse, the adjunct clearinghouse will be a full partner in the ERIC system and will have a designated scope for the information that it acquires, processes, and disseminates. The principle differences between the traditional clearinghouse and the adjunct clearinghouse will be (1) the source of its funding and (2) the activities which it chooses to fund. The adjunct clearinghouse will not depend upon the federal government for its operating capital. It will receive one-time only development or "recognition" money to establish itself among the network of other ERIC components. Thus, the most obvious requirement for the adjunct will be its ability to make or attract a long-term, substantial (3 to 5 year) commitment of resources to adequately sustain all fundamental clearinghouse operations and to guarantee a stream of information over time. Since the lion's share of the resources will be donated by the organization or consortia of organizations proposing to join the ERIC system, the adjunct clearinghouse will have the flexibility to determine if it will it will engage only in core clearinghouse operations or outreach operations such as training, publications development, and user services.

Using the adjunct concept, it is easy to envision a collaborative volunteer effort referred to as the "Fine Arts Information Exchange (FAIE)" but also bearing the designation "Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse." Thus, the collaborative effort would retain the unique identity (e.g. FAIE) derived from its supporting partners as well as the status it acquires from participating in the ERIC system (e.g. Adjunct Clearinghouse).

For instance, the imagined "Fine Arts Information Exchange" might have an important collection of information which, it believes, would broaden ERIC's coverage of a particular scope or domain. Participating as an adjunct clearinghouse, the FAIE would add its information collection to the ERIC database and thus make it available and accessible to audiences interested in its content. As an adjunct clearinghouse, it would supplement "core" areas already covered by other ERIC clearinghouses.

As currently conceived by OERI, the adjunct clearinghouse will perform many of the same functions as the traditional ERIC clearinghouse. It will highlight current education issues and will be of potential interest to private enterprise or to foundations. Its focus will be the subject scopes or domains currently given spotty coverage by one clearinghouse or segmented coverage by several clearinghouses. Indeed, the technical proposals submitted for an adjunct clearinghouse will be judged -- as will the technical proposals for a traditional clearinghouse -- on the basis of demonstrated expertise in a particular subject scope as well as access to and experience working with the professional networks in the fields or domains related to that scope. The adjunct clearinghouse is <u>not</u> to be a "catch-as-catch-can" organization.

Examples of subject areas that would be candidates for coverage by adjunct clearinghouses include private education, art and music education, and education policy.

At present OERI has set aside $150,000 for the establishment of three adjunct clearinghouses. The assumption is that $50,000 per clearinghouse is "recognition" or development money to launch an adjunct operation in its first year. The $50,000 recognition money will be available to those offerors who submit proposals in the specified <u>priority areas for adjunct clearinghouses</u> which will be identified. OERI will consider other areas for coverage as adjunct clearinghouses, but these will not receive OERI support. Rather, they will depend upon the largesse of the offeror or consortium of offerors.

<u>Characteristics of an Adjunct Clearinghouse</u>

This section addresses the operational characteristics of the adjunct clearinghouse -- how it will function and how it will relate to other ERIC system components as well as how it will be evaluated and how and under what conditions it will be funded.

While an adjunct clearinghouse will be more autonomous than a traditional clearinghouse, and therefore have more flexibility to determine the allocation of its resources, there are certain standards to which an adjunct should adhere in order to be compatible with the ERIC system. These are standards that exist for the well-being of the whole system -- standards without which the viability of the system would be seriously jeopardized.

For the most part these standards involve basic information processing operations that exist across the ERIC system for reasons of compatibility, continuity, clarity, ease of communication, absence of ambiguity, and quality control. For example, an adjunct clearinghouse should use the ERIC Processing Manual to guide fundamental processing operations. An adjunct clearinghouse would also be compelled to rely upon other system components for certain system tasks. For instance, an adjunct clearinghouse would have to use the ERIC Facility to perform the final editing and reviews of its document abstracts and annotations and to prepare these resumes for processing as part of creating the database master tapes. The Facility would train an adjunct clearinghouse in the intricacies of the system's formats, descriptors, identifiers, and other lexicographical attributes. An adjunct clearinghouse would also have to rely upon EDRS to produce and market the microfiche of its RIE entries.

The requirements for belonging to and participating in the benefits of the ERIC system would be adherence to these "mini standards" for gathering and processing information.

A. An adjunct clearinghouse will demonstrate long-term financial commitment to the ERIC system in order to assure the provision of a steady stream of information and ensure stability.

Since continuity as well as depth and breadth of coverage are integral to the quality and usefulness of any database, an adjunct clearinghouse proposal must show that the offeror will be able to commit resources for a specified period of time and that these resources will not be terminated abruptly. A commitment of three to five years appears reasonable.

B. An adjunct clearinghouse will supplement core areas of information that are being given only spotty coverage by the current system.

An adjunct clearinghouse will provide greater breadth and depth of coverage to areas of information currently being given only fragmented or superficial attention by the system. The work of an adjunct clearinghouse is meant to supplement already existing "core" areas of the ERIC database.

C. An adjunct clearinghouse will perform many of the functions of a traditional clearinghouse.

An adjunct clearinghouse will cover a specified scope. At a minimum, it will seek out, acquire, screen, abstract, and annotate documents within that scope in accordance with already established ERIC terminology and lexicography.

Depending upon its capabilities and the resources available to it, an adjunct clearinghouse may also choose to offer user services as well as prepare publications or other types of information analysis products related to its scope. Similar to the traditional clearinghouse, an adjunct clearinghouse may engage in outreach efforts -- offering services to standing order customers in its region, responding to specific inquiries in its subject scope, and providing certain types of training. An adjunct clearinghouse will not be a part-time partner.

D. An adjunct clearinghouse technical proposal will be evaluated against the same standards as a traditional clearinghouse technical proposal.

Adjuncts will be responsible for meeting the following criteria:

- demonstration of knowledge and understanding of the ERIC system and its mission, and the role of the clearinghouse in advancing that mission;

- evidence of knowledge and understanding of current and emerging issues and literature (issue sensing) in the scope area of the clearinghouse;

- adequacy of plans and procedures for accomplishing clearinghouse work and managing staff time, resources, and product delivery;

- staff qualifications; and,

- organizational capability.

E. An adjunct clearinghouse will be responsible for ensuring the accession of quality documents as well as the implementation of quality controls throughout its operation.

Since quality is the key to the soundness and credibility of this system, it will be of critical importance that the adjunct clearinghouse enforce quality standards. According to Havelock (1977), quality is "one of the most vexing and oft discussed issues in ERIC input." Indeed, the quality issue has been argued at great length throughout the history of ERIC in papers and other reviews of the ERIC system and lately again during the redesign panel meetings. The production of quality documents must first begin with careful selection procedures including reviews for: the appropriateness of document content to education and to a particular clearinghouse's scope; the suitability of the document type or format as well as its legibility, reproducibility, and suitability; and, last but not least the content of the document. Different types of documents (curriculum materials, research reports) give rise to different types of selection issues and the ERIC Processing Manual advises on the application of criteria in these cases. The Processing Manual also

discusses in detail the subject of content quality and outlines the following important characteristics: a document's contribution to knowledge, its relevance to current issues, the newness of the ideas it offers, its thoroughness in providing information and linking conclusions to that information, its relation to current priorities, timeliness, and the size of its audience.

An adjunct clearinghouse will be responsible for ensuring the application of these standards and will utilize peer review procedures in the selection process. It must call upon external specialists as well as staff judgments and the judgments of its advisory board members.

F. An adjunct clearinghouse will have the option of engaging in the same sets of organizational relationships with other ERIC system components such as ACCESS ERIC, the ERIC partners, and the other clearinghouses.

An adjunct clearinghouse can rely upon ACCESS ERIC to: link it to other education dissemination systems and services (including other ERIC partners); identify specific needs upon which it should focus; promote its specific expertise to appropriate audiences; and develop and implement marketing strategies for its particular products and services.

An adjunct clearinghouse can rely upon the ERIC outlets or partners to identify potential audiences for its products and serve as conduits for regular and targeted distribution of these products.

Summary

During the past ten months, the ERIC redesign initiative has stimulated much new, even creative thinking about the ERIC system. Redesign panel members, OERI staff, ERIC users, and the public have been involved in a continuing dialogue about what aspects of ERIC ought to be improved and how these improvements ought to be approached. Through this dialogue, which also included discussions about different types of collaborative ventures, the concept of the adjunct clearinghouse emerged. The intent of this concept is plain -- to supplement core areas of education information covered by the traditional ERIC clearinghouses. Embracing the concept means looking to the private sector -- to business and industry, education and cultural organizations, and foundations -- as well as other areas of government for commitment to the idea and for additional resources. Implementing the concept means opening up the ERIC system to a new world of partnerships that will enhance its visibility, expand its coverage, enrich its database, and enlarge its use by the world of education information seekers.